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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5213
INFO RUEHXP/ALL NATO POST COLLECTIVE
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 1283

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SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/10/2019

TAGS: [KCFE](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [GM](#)

SUBJECT: A/CFE: GERMANY FAVORS FLEXIBILITY TO NUDGE RUSSIA

REF: STATE 92528

¶1. (C) Summary. On September 10 Poloff delivered reftel points to MFA Office Director for Conventional Arms Control Michael Banzhaf. Banzhaf took particular note of Antonov's redlines with regard to abolishment of flank regimes for Russia and non-implementation of the "existing" CFE Treaty. Banzhaf said that the Allies should look at ways of accommodating Russian concerns that the A/CFE is outdated and needs to be revised to reflect the current situation. He said Germany's immediate focus is to bringing Russia back in compliance with the CFE verification regime -- even if it means provisional implementation of the A/CFE Treaty prior to ratification. End summary.

¶2. (C) During the discussion Balzhaf returned several times to Antonov's call for the flank regime to be abolished for Russia and commented that some of Russia's complaints "seemed sensible". However, Banzhaf underscored that Russia was taking the wrong approach toward negotiation. He emphasized that, above all, Russia must be brought back in compliance with the CFE verification regime and said that would be easier for Allies to show some flexibility if Moscow had resumed implementation of the current CFE Treaty.

¶3. (C) Nevertheless, Balzhaf indicated that Germany was sympathetic to the Russian view that the A/CFE Treaty is already outdated and should be revised now to reflect new realities. In particular, he questioned whether the Allies should insist on ratification before commencing a discussion on changes to the flank regime. If it could move Russia toward compliance, Balzhaf said that the Allies should be open to the idea of provisional implementation of A/CFE, even prior to ratification.

¶4. (C) Balzhaf noted that MFA lead for Arms Control Peter Gottwald planned to reach out the U/S Tauscher the week of September 14 to discuss this and other issues.
Murphy